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DEPT FOR EAP/MTS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [RP](#)  
SUBJECT: RAJAH SOLAIMAN TERRORIST LEADER APPREHENDED

Classified By: Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM) leader Dinno-Amor Rosalejos Pareja (a.k.a. "Khalil Pareja") was arrested August 21 at a Marawi City hideout by Philippine National Police (PNP), acting on a tip from an informant. Although RSM had been less active in recent years, Pareja had been actively sought by Philippine authorities for his role in several deadly terrorist attacks. He is the subject of a \$90,000 U.S. Department of Defense reward, as well as a reward from the Philippine government of approximately \$10,400. Pareja's arrest represents a serious blow to future RSM operations, and underscores Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's stated commitment to aggressively hunt down terrorist elements in the southern Philippines while pursuing peace negotiations with Muslim insurgents. END SUMMARY.

Background  
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12. (C) The Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM), founded in 1991 by Hilarion Ahmed Santos, consists primarily of Christian converts to Islam who blend in easily and move about freely in Manila and elsewhere. Pareja, Santos's brother-in-law, assumed leadership of the RSM following Santos's 2005 capture. Pareja will face charges resulting from the Valentine's Day 2005 bus bombing in Manila's Makati financial district that killed three and wounded many more, as well as a 2005 attack on a Philippine Army detachment that killed 10 soldiers. RSM is also believed to be linked to the 2004 bombing of a ferry in Manila Bay that claimed 116 lives. RSM maintains links to Al Qaeda and the Indonesia-based Jema'ah Islamiyah (JI). Pareja is believed to have studied bombmaking techniques under fugitive JI bombers Dulmatin and Umar Patek, who carried out the 2002 attack in Bali that killed more than 200.

Subject of Both U.S. and Philippine Rewards  
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13. (S/NF) According to sensitive reporting (protect), Pareja's apprehension was facilitated by a Muslim PNP officer who was able to infiltrate the area of Marawi where Pareja's family and friends had been hiding him. Although there are no outstanding U.S. warrants for Pareja, he appears on the terrorist lookout list for international travel, and in the Philippines he was one of the most sought-after fugitives from justice. An informant who helped lead police to Pareja was paid a reward of 500,000 Pesos (approximately US\$10,400) by the PNP. Pareja is also the subject of a U.S. Department of Defense Rewards Program Wanted List reward of \$90,000, approved by U.S. Pacific Command in March 2007.

Comment  
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14. (C) Pareja's arrest represents a significant blow to the Rajah Solaiman Movement. Never large in numbers, the RSM had been less active in recent years under Pareja's leadership. Although RSM had not flourished under his leadership, Pareja has no clear successor who can marshall the resurgence of a group that lacks a clear geographic or ethnic membership base. Since President Arroyo's July 30 Oval Office meeting, in which she outlined a two-track strategy of aggressively targeting terrorists while simultaneously pursuing peace negotiations with MILF insurgents, Philippine armed forces have been engaged in heavy fighting against Abu Sayyaf Group terrorists, while MILF peace talks appear finally to be back on track. The capture of the RSM leader offers further evidence that Arroyo's approach seems to be working.

KENNEY